and survival. It has been compared to Plato's ideal in *The Republic*^ the Brahmin being the equivalent to the philosopher-king, but one has to ask the question: When was he anything of the kind? In the distant past he was forbidden to have property, and to teach and illuminate. He degenerated into a parasitic class of priests. After the iconoclasm of Buddhism the counter-revolution of the Brahmins led to their increasing tyranny over the lives of the people. Nothing could be done without their being consulted and they dominated the *kshatryas* or rulers.

There are still some who believe that the Hindu system can be rationalised and revived. Some maintain that it was a kind of Socialism. It is true that since the Vedic age there existed all over India guilds of craftsmen and merchants which were autonomous and practically exempt from State interference, and which often united in a league. It is true also that in ancient India there was local government conducted by village assemblies and town assemblies also. We may allow with Dutt that tribal organisations became social corporations strictly outside the sphere of State interference. He gives evidence to suggest that the State in ancient India was only the administrator of existing laws vested in autonomous bodies and carried on by popular tribunals, and that "tribal and clannish organisations of a republican or democratic character persisted vigorously and survived the breakup of Gupta imperialism."[1] There was a very real philosophy of politics in ancient India (cf., for example, the discussion of Kautilya in the *Arthasastra* on monarchy). Successive invasions led to the degeneration of Hindu society.

But having said all this, one must add that if Hinduism became allied to modern capitalism and used the old traditions the result would be an effective form of Fascism. The three-fold strand of birth, tradition and country would make [1] Cf. pp. 112 and p. 130.